Key to Success this fortnight: Getting Along

Absenteism the Biggest Blocker to Student Success

Many research studies have shown a clear link between attendance at school and achievement of students. Quite simply, we cannot make a difference if children are not at school and a part of the teaching and learning process.

The curriculum is moving rapidly, and students who miss school can start to feel school reluctant and anxious.

At Sandy Strait we have set an attendance target this year of at least 93% by all students. This means that students will fall into less than good attendance if they have more than 10 days off from school each year. **There are 365 days** in a calendar year and it might surprise you to know that **170 of those days are non-school days**, so there are plenty of opportunities for shopping, family holidays and appointments which will not impact on your child’s learning.

It is expected that when your child is absent, you provide a reason for non-attendance. Most absences are a result of student illness. Unexplained absences should be “tied up” as soon as possible as there are consequences for parents who do not send children to school. This can include involvement by child safety authorities and legal penalties and fines. **Every day, every minute counts.**

Absences are recorded and reported to the government on compulsory returns. Some absences are recorded as “unauthorised” - this code is used when absences are not deemed as...
News from the Principal Continued  Mrs Sharon McMorrow

acceptable reasons for being absent. This might include family holidays and weekends away, parent or student birthdays, moving house, custodial disputes etc.

Your child’s future study and employment pathways are strongly linked to what he/she does now. In the past we have watched as students who have been allowed to develop poor attendance at school, from an early age, fall behind and eventually become anxious and school reluctant. Do not fall into this trap. If you have concerns and your child is becoming school reluctant please speak to a member of the Leadership Team or our Guidance Officer Mrs Heather Laud.

The Attendance Data for Our Year Levels this Fortnight is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Improvement Priority Areas

Each year as part of our Strategic Planning Process we establish priority areas.

In 2016 our key priority focus areas are:

- Whole School Reading
- Whole School Word Study
- Whole School Numeracy
- Consistency in Practice

All aspects of school organisation including staffing and resourcing are structured around these key priority areas.

On our school facebook page and in upcoming newsletters we will continue to update our school community on the programs in focus and the ways in which we are supporting children to make leaps forward in the learning in these most important learning areas.

P&C AGM - WE NEED YOU!

Please join us at 3pm on Wednesday 9th March in the Conference Room in the school office for our AGM. This is a very important meeting where all positions are declared open and you have your chance to join the committee or show your support by your attendance. Please consider attending if you are new to our school or find you would like to lend a hand. Come on, take a chance and see what we are all about. We would love to see you.

This year the P&C have some great fundraising events planned:

Term 1 — Easter Egg Monster Raffle, Tuckshop Meal Deal
Term 2 — Spell-a-thon, Mothers Day Stall and Tuckshop Meal Deal
Term 3 — School Disco, Father’s Day Stall and Tuckshop Meal Deal.

OSH C Started in our School Hall This Week

We are very excited to finally have Outside School Hours Care operating out of our school hall. From Monday 22nd February before and after school care commenced 5 days a week from 6.30am – 8.45am and 2.50 pm – 6.00 pm.

Parent information packs with enrolment forms are available and contain all of the information required to enrol your children. It is a licencing requirement that any child using the service must be enrolled. There is no fee to enrol with Helping Hands, it is recommended that all children are enrolled so that the service is available for your family, even if only in an emergency.

Email: accounts@helpinghandsnetwork.com.au or call our Help Desk if you would like an enrolment pack sent to you or if you would like to speak to someone regarding the service. You can also enrol online at www.helpinghandsnetwork.com.au/schools-families. Enrolment packs are also available at the school office.

As a school we look forward to welcoming Helping Hands and know that they will add significant value to our school community.

If you have any questions about Helping Hands and the service they will be providing to the school, please contact the Helping Hands Help Desk on 1300 612 462.
Year 6 Leadership Camp

The school is pleased to be able to communicate to parents of Year 6 students that the cost of the Year 6 Leadership camp to Maranatha is $220.00.

Camp will be held from Wednesday 9th March to Friday 11th March and parents are encouraged to make their payments via the office now. The full cost ($220.00) is required to be paid by 4th March.

Leadership Assembly

This Friday (9:30 am) Student Leaders and House Captain Representatives will be officially recognised, during our badge ceremony on a special senior assembly.

During this ceremony, Miss Taylor Mackie, a former Sandy Strait State School student and current School Captain at Urangan State High School will assist with the presentation.

Leadership Conference

Our school has also registered and paid for all our 2016 student leaders to attend the GRIP Student Leadership Conference to be held in the Maryborough City hall on Wednesday, 2nd March, 2016. The conference will commence at 8:45 am and conclude at 2:30 pm.

Culture


Whether we like it or not, our school has a reputation. That reputation, held by the coffee shop mums, the local real estate agents, the pensioner who lives across the road from our school, parent helpers and the staff member who catches up with friends at a BBQ is MORE powerful than any slick marketing strategies.

Reputations are VERY powerful, on both a personal and school level.

On a personal level, it is important that we take some time to reflect on what we would like our reputation to be and then act that way. If we personally want to get a reputation of being positive, caring and passionate about our students then our behaviours have to be congruent.

A similar process applies for our school. If we would like our school’s reputation to be one that is caring, welcoming and focusing on the all-round development of our students then our actions have to match. In all our interactions we need to make decisions that reflect a school that is caring, welcoming of all families and providing a broad range of opportunities in a balanced program.

Whilst defining school culture is not easy, the culture in our school has a massive impact. A school culture affects the morale, engagement and attendance of both students and staff.

Visitors who walk through our school gate ‘feel’ the school’s culture.

- Are we welcoming?
- Is our environment calm and supportive?
- Is it an interesting place to be?
- Is excitement generated?
- Is there energy?

The school culture runs much deeper than welcome at the front gate or at the front office to new visitors. Even more important than the impact our school culture has on visitors and prospective parents is the daily impact our school’s culture has on students.

Our school’s culture is visible in how people interact on a daily basis - teachers, students, support staff and parents. Are the interactions positive or do they at least end in a positive way? Are students and staff smiling, having a good time, actively engaged? Are parents interested and involved?

"Culture is not something that you manipulate easily. Attempts to grab it and twist it into a new shape never work because you can’t grab it. Culture changes only after you have successfully altered people’s actions, after the new behaviour produces some group benefit for a period of time."

The fastest way to improve a school culture is to identify problems and fix them! What are the factors that frustrate staff, students and parents and get in their way?

If you can’t ‘fix’ the problem immediately, at least acknowledge it exists and identify steps for improving the situation. Being seen to have listened is a good start to improving the school culture.

AFL Gala Day

Mr Baldwin will accompany 2 teams of boys and girls from Year 5 & 6 classes to compete in the AFL Gala day this Friday 26th February. We wish them the best of luck.

News from Finance

A reminder to please return Staples Book Pack Feedback form to the office asap and that the School Resource Scheme fee is due Friday, 24th March, 2016.
Meet and Greet

Thank you to all the parents who took the time to visit their child’s classroom and meet their child’s teacher. If you were unable to come to the meet and greet please find time to connect with your child’s teacher either through email or drop in before or after school when possible as teachers value any support, insight and/or information you can provide.

Leap into Learning

All of our students are engaged in their units of learning and settling into routines for this term. All classroom units of work in English, Maths, Science, Geography, Health and PE, Music and Art are well underway and students are providing some excellent samples of their knowledge.

Please check Facebook for pictures of students at work and their learning. If you would like further information on ‘what’ students are learning please email, ring or meet with your child’s teacher for a specific overview of the work they are doing.

Intensive Intervention

Students who require support in Literacy in Prep to Year Three are receiving Intensive Intervention with Miss Robe, Mrs Ashcroft, Mrs Smith and Mrs Fallon. These students are carefully monitored and provided with support around phonics, spelling reading and writing.

Mr Hansen is working with teachers and students on the implementation of our school wide maths program where lessons are tailored to allow opportunities and expectations for all students to participate in thinking and learning mathematically.

Mrs Bennion is working with teachers and students in Prep and Year One on our SSP program (Speech, Sounds, Pictures) which focuses on oral language, phonemic awareness and phonics. This then allows students to move smoothly into our word study program and continue with their literacy learning.

If you would like further information on the support your child is receiving please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher.

Vocabulary and Reading

This term we are working more closely with helping students identify unfamiliar vocabulary. We have found that students are often able to read (decode) words due to the work they do with their reading strategies but don’t understand the meaning of some the words they are reading (decoding) or hearing. When students are unsure of the meaning of vocabulary they simply ‘make up’ the meaning or ignore the word as they read on or listen to the story. This results in flawed or limited understanding of the text they are hearing or reading.

The work we are doing with vocabulary asks students to firstly identify unfamiliar words and then apply strategies to help them work out the meaning to ensure students develop a deeper understanding of the text. These strategies will help students each time they read unfamiliar words and encourage students to work out meanings rather than skip the word. Strategies include discussing their understanding, providing a meaning in their own words, working with synonyms, antonyms, suffixes and prefixes, visualising and using words in games.

When reading ‘to’ or ‘with’ your child please take time at the end of the reading to ask them the meaning of one or two words they have read or heard. If your child has a confused understanding of the word simply provide a synonym (a word with the same meaning) and repeat the sentence using the synonym and the original word.

Reminder—Letter Sent Home on Monday

We are asking families to donate Easter Eggs which will then be used as prizes in our raffle.

Easter Egg donations are to be taken to the school office where there will be a donation box. All donations are to be received by the office no later than 4 March, 2016.

The raffle prizes will then be prepared and a letter together with a book of 5 raffle tickets will be sent home with all students on 7 March, 2016.

All monies from sale of raffle tickets, together with any remaining unsold tickets, are to be returned to the office no later than 18 March, 2016.

The Easter Raffle prize winners will be drawn on 21 March, 2016.

Thank you for supporting our P&C Fundraising efforts.
A lot is happening in the Chappy Program this term - which is wonderful, and students are very responsive in wanting to be involved in Chappy activities. So I want to just let you know is on the agenda for this term:-

The BEAR plan has been implemented as a whole school plan, it is a very easy and effective strategy that students can use when they are feeling anxious or overwhelmed. Some students have taken teddy bears home already this term as a reminder to:

B - Breath
E - Exit
A - Ask
R - Relax

Using the bear is a good prompt for students. If your child is older and too embarrassed to hug a bear, than they can download a free app for the phone or tablet called “smiling minds”.

As part of the friendship group this year we are Gardening, and what a response from year 5’s and 6’s. We are going to utilise the community Garden that is at the back of the school. This term we are planting a pizza garden, making windmills from plastic bottles, and starting our worm experiments. It should be a great term of learning to work together and building relationships.

Well until next time.

Chappy

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN EVERYDAY PARENTING
PARENTING FOR 0-18 YRS

Positive discipline is an approach to parenting that teaches children and guides their behaviour. The program will help you build a mutually respectful relationship with your child and promote their right to healthy development. It encourages finding long-term solutions that develop children’s own self-discipline and their life long skills.

There are four key components of the program:

1. Identifying your long-term childrearing goals.
2. Providing warmth and structure.
3. Understanding how children think and feel.
4. Problem-solving

When: Monday 29 February, 2016 (then weekly—Monday 7, 14, 21 March, 2016)
Time: 9.30 am to 12.30 pm
Where: Unity Care Community
94 Old Maryborough Road, Pialba
Phone: 07 4191 3100 (Bookings essential)
Cost: $5.00 per session (To cover purchase of materials)

Please call UnitingCare Community for further details on 07 4191 3100 between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm.
FOR SALE
Secilio Clarinet B Flat $80
Ms Borg
Mob 0408955388

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY 2016
It's time to take a look around your local area – your streets, parks, sporting grounds, beaches, bushland and waterways to find those rubbish hotspots that need attention.

Join an existing group or register your own site for Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 6 March 2016.

Or get your school involved and register to clean up around the school grounds on Friday 4 March.

This is your chance to get involved and join the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who will grab their white and yellow bags and don their gloves to clean up their local community.

Over the last 26 years volunteers have donated more than 29.8 million hours towards caring for the environment through Clean Up Australia Day, removing the equivalent of 315,776ute loads of rubbish from 158,809 sites across the country.

To register go to www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au

www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/recycling